

**AWNA's Online Annual General Meeting and Convention
Friday, June 4, 2021**

AGENDA

- 12:30 PM Paul MacNeill, presentation on '**Business Market**', a pathway to digital revenue for community newspapers
- 1:15 PM Meeting Called to Order, president Mary Kemmis
Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting
Business arising from the minutes

REPORTS

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| President's report | - Mary Kemmis |
| First report of Nominating Committee | - Jason Lyon |
| Executive | - Jason Lyon |
| Financial statement/ Executive Director's report | - Dennis Merrell |
| Approval of 2020 audited financial statements | |
| Advertising/ AdCanada | - Evan Jamison
Jeff Beardsworth |
| Better Newspapers Competition | - Jill Sherring |
| Government Affairs | - Lisa Sygutek |
| Membership | - Dave Bruha |
| 2021 Convention | - Shannon Robison |
| Final report of Nominating Committee | - Jason Lyon |
| Election/installation of Officers | |
| Approval of the actions of the Board of Directors | |
| Appointment of KPMG as auditors | |
| New Business | |
| 2:30 PM Virtual Coffee Break | |
| 2:45 PM Online AGM resumes | |
| 3:30 PM Virtual Social Hour | - Shannon Robison |
| 4:30 PM Adjournment | |

President's Report,

June 2021

Unprecedented, exhausting, chaotic, surreal, relentless, - all words used to describe the past year. And all, in some way, hold some truth for most of us.

But it's also been transformative for our organization, our industry, our readers and our customers.

At a time when fake news is no longer the outlier, newspapers are regaining their status as a beacon of trust and truth in an ocean of conspiracy theories and misinformation.

AWNA has been working to ensure our organization continues to represent the interests of our industry and remains viable and strong.

Much of our activity over the past year has focussed upon lobbying efforts to protect the future of our industry.

The AWNA board and government affairs committee are working hard to eliminate, or at the least minimize, the threat of policy changes to the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) recycling program that is being explored by the Alberta government. The program could add extraordinary expenses at a time when we are also bearing the costly weight of trusted news reporting without the strong advertising buttress that endeavour requires.

The organization has also supported the lobbying efforts of News Media Canada to require monolithic information gateways like Facebook and Google to negotiate with Canadian news media to redistribute revenues to reflect the importance of newspapers to their success. While it has been argued there is no direct benefit of sharing revenues based on digital audience to much of our independently-owned member base, the indirect benefits of increased profile and recognition of the importance of newspapers in our information ecosystem will help us all. More directly, we are also supporting News Media Canada efforts to update the Heritage Canada Aid to Publishers program, moving from subsidising Canada Post to more directly supporting trusted journalism.

With AWNA no longer operating a regional sales service for our members, we took steps to downsize our office footprint and reduce our staff. In order to ensure long-term viability, we put our offices up for sale and accepted an offer in April. As a board, we believed that holding onto an asset that promised increasing upgrade and repairs costs as it aged, and unpredictable commercial real estate valuations over the next few years, was more precarious than selling the building and investing the money to secure our future. Going forward, with the completion of the deal, the AWNA will rent back a small portion of the building for continued operations.

After our first full year of ceding national advertising responsibility to Ad Canada Media, member feedback has been positive. We are negotiating an extension of our agreement, which expires in December.

The change in focus from sales to lobbying has also allowed us to reduce our staffing numbers, which we have done over the past year. While the staff buyouts negatively affected our bottom line, we are entering the new year in a positive position of revenue growth.

I know we had all hoped that the worst would have been long behind us by now, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel. The new normal won't be the old normal, but the increased profile of newspapers in traditional and digital form is a brighter light than we've seen for a while.

Thank you to the board for its unwavering support of our industry, to committee members who gave so much of their time and to our Executive Director Dennis Merrell for his many years of dedication and leadership. And thank you to all our members who tell stories that matter and make our world a brighter place.

Mary Kemmis
AWNA President

Executive Director's Report

June 2021

The best word to describe the past 12 months for your association is transition.

We completed the hand-off of our advertising service to AdCanada. Then the pandemic arrived, which led to temporary business closures, reduced ad spending and about a ten percent loss in newspaper titles due to consolidations and closures. This conspired against AdCanada, but for the most part, members have been supportive of what Jeff Beardsworth and his team have been able to do for them.

In the process, AWNA transitioned to a traditional trade association, one that provides advocacy, training and awards programs, in addition to managing the relationship with AdCanada on members' behalf.

During this significant adjustment to the association's business model, we said goodbye to some amazing employees, such as Controller Chrissie Hamblin and Allana Bridgewater, Client Service Supervisor and Member Services.

We also down-sized our office footprint, leasing out more of our downstairs and upstairs space to our two tenants. In April, we accepted an offer to purchase the condominium, as part of our long-term strategy to stabilize our organization, and allow our more limited staff resources to focus upon activities that are important to our membership.

Financial results

Our effort to transition the AWNA into a leaner, more traditional association model is beginning to show results in the 2021 fiscal year, as we have achieved surpluses in both March and April, the first time in a long while since that has happened.

We knew that it would take a while for us to achieve that. In 2020, we budgeted a loss of \$68,000, but due to a shortfall in revenue of \$45,000, our year ended with a loss on operations of \$116,000.

We ended the year with \$57,000 in Ad Canada royalties, compared to \$110,000 budgeted. In fairness to Jeff's team at Ad Canada, the AWNA made a conscious decision to forego the member space donation program, given the calamitous revenue drop members have experienced during the pandemic. The two quarter page ads would have contributed \$37,000 to association revenue in 2020. So, Ad Canada fell short of their projection by \$16,000 when that is taken into account.

The association's other revenue categories include blanket classifieds/value ads, rental income, interest/investment income and a share of AWSOM archive royalties.

Although some of these revenue sources are in decline, the overall picture looks reasonably stable over the near term.

Change in focus

The AWNA has downsized its office footprint to 500 square feet on the second floor of our office condominium. Staff has been reduced as well. Maurizia Hinse, Blanket Classified Ad and Professional Development & Communication Coordinator, is still with us, and Executive Director Dennis Merrell continues in his role as Executive Director, on reduced hours. Julie Anne McRae is a part-time consultant who assists us with newspaper awards, database management, and management of member communication tools such as Slack and MailChimp. Maurizia has taken on some of the accounting functions, with help from former Controller Chrissie Hamblin, a part-time consultant.

While some of these changes may seem draconian, they were seen as necessary in order to reestablish your association as a long-term viable entity, able to serve members in an effective manner, particularly with all that's happening on the government advocacy front.

We believe that much of the painful work of reorganization is behind us and we pledge to continue to build the profile of community newspapers, in conjunction with our partners AdCanada and News Media Canada.

Sale of office condominium

Our decision to accept an offer to purchase the AWNA condominium is another part of the transition.

The AWNA board and Executive Director examined the pros and cons of continuing to rent our space vs selling. In the end, a decision was made to accept the offer, which we expect to close on June 30th.

While it's likely that rental income would exceed investment returns over the short-term, we had to factor in the vagaries of the Edmonton suburban office market in the wake of the pandemic, and the uncertainties that surround that in the long-term.

We have agreed to lease back 500 square feet on the 2nd floor of the condo, with the lease due to expire on October 31, 2023.

AWNA receives Civil Society Fund grant for internships, research

The association was awarded a provincial government grant in the amount of \$145,000 in late January. The grant will support nine student internships at AWNA newspapers this summer, in addition to funding a new readership research project that will be conducted in late summer/early fall.

AdCanada CEO Jeff Beardsworth is working with Claude Heimann to develop the survey. Although it will build upon previous media usage research we've done in the past, we're taking a slightly different direction, adding questions related to the pandemic, and designing the questionnaire to mimic the ComBase research that was conducted by News Media Canada.

When the provincial government announced the Civil Society Fund in late 2020, it was indicated that the program would run for five years, so we'll look closely at it when the next round of funding begins.

Dennis Merrell, CAE
Executive Director

Advertising Committee Report

June 2021

The past 12 months have been challenging to say the least. Shortly after AdCanada took over as the national sales arm for AWNA members, we were hit by the Covid pandemic. Sales declined sharply and we have been going through ups and downs ever since, as our governments and advertisers constantly adjust to ever-changing conditions.

We are now roughly three quarters of the way into our initial two-year contract with AdCanada. Considering the exceptional circumstances everyone has been managing through, feedback from the membership regarding the AdCanada transition has been generally positive. Some concerns have been brought forward by the membership and we will take these into consideration as we negotiate the next contract term.

Jeff Beardsworth has been providing the AWNA Board with regular updates on sales initiatives. Not being able to physically get in front of agencies and advertisers has been a significant challenge. Although we have many great tools available to us in the digital environment, it isn't quite the same as a face-to-face sales pitch. Aside from outright reductions related the pandemic, AdCanada has also been wrestling with the ongoing erosion of funds available for advertising campaigns. Many organizations have significantly reduced their advertising budgets over time and struggle with the cost of advertising in physical newspapers relative to the cheaper rates available online. Many agencies also operate their own digital agencies and retain better margins by pushing their clients online. These dynamics continue to put downward pressure on advertising rates. With these issues in mind, AdCanada has been working hard to find new, innovative ways of keeping community newspapers in the mix. There certainly doesn't appear to be any lack of effort on their side.

Getting in front of our Provincial Government regarding advertising, or other matters, has also proven to be an ongoing challenge. We are looking at ways to open doors, including through local MLA contacts and perhaps through the use of a government relations firm.

A number of publishers continue to inquire about getting into online advertising or expanding their online presence. Some have asked how AWNA can assist with this and how AdCanada could be involved. This is a challenging issue given the different technical skills, IT infrastructure, HR availability and market potential of different publishers. Although we have considered this in the past, we are going to take a closer look at how AWNA and AdCanada can help out on this front.

With the rate of vaccinations increasing by the day, it looks like we are ever closer to returning to a more normal world. What exactly this new normal looks like regarding advertising sales remains to be seen, but there are positive signs that we will see an increase in volumes as businesses and events are able to resume their operations.

Evan Jamison
Vice President AWNA
Ad Committee Co-Chair

Financial Statements of

**ALBERTA WEEKLY
NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION**

Year ended December 31, 2020

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

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December 31, 2020, with comparative information for 2019

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KPMG LLP
2200, 10175-101 Street
Edmonton Alberta T5J 0H3
Canada
Tel (780) 429-7300
Fax (780) 429-7379

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association (the "Entity"), which comprise:

- the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2020
- the statement of operations for the year then ended
- the statement of changes in net assets for the year then ended
- the statement of cash flows for the year then ended
- and notes and schedules to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies

(Hereinafter referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at December 31, 2020, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the "***Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***" section of our auditors' report.

We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.



We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.



- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

KPMG LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants

Edmonton, Canada

April 29, 2021

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2020, with comparative information for 2019

	2020	2019
Assets		
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 212,477	\$ 230,939
Accounts receivable (note 2)	33,892	286,867
Prepaid expenses and deposits	15,092	19,217
	<u>261,461</u>	<u>537,023</u>
Investments (note 3)	361,045	455,655
Capital assets (note 4)	884,431	871,992
	<u>\$ 1,506,937</u>	<u>\$ 1,864,670</u>

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 5)	\$ 42,850	\$ 339,890
Unearned revenue (note 6)	15,000	-
Deposits payable	7,175	7,175
	<u>65,025</u>	<u>347,065</u>
Long term debt (note 7)	40,000	-
Net assets:		
Internally restricted (note 8)	-	336,187
Investment in capital assets	884,431	871,992
Unrestricted	517,481	309,426
	<u>1,401,912</u>	<u>1,517,605</u>
Impacts of COVID-19 (note 11)		
	<u>\$ 1,506,937</u>	<u>\$ 1,864,670</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

On behalf of the Board:

_____ Director

_____ Director

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Statement of Operations

Year ended December 31, 2020, with comparative information for 2019

	2020	2019
Revenues:		
Blanket classified advertising	\$ 168,000	\$ 211,893
AWSOM archive	93,308	97,164
Grant revenue and government assistance (note 9)	60,656	79,034
Rental	55,085	56,846
AdCanada revenue	57,082	482
Investment income (note 3)	10,982	48,437
Special fund - blanket classified advertising	6,255	17,344
Display advertising:		
Agency	4,751	1,112,905
Press release revenue	2,160	1,690
Contributions and revenue recoveries	1,185	148
Career display advertising	150	2,430
Direct	-	468,088
Convention	-	18,452
AWNET	-	785
	459,614	2,115,698
Expenses:		
Operating expenses (Schedule 1)	507,307	672,135
AWSOM archive	48,438	59,387
Blanket classified advertising	11,831	24,840
Display advertising	4,652	1,300,061
Recoverable expenses	1,843	29
Marketing and promotion expenses (Schedule 2)	885	75,902
Committee expenses (Schedule 3)	281	33,033
Career display advertising	70	890
Convention	-	10,138
	575,307	2,176,415
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	\$ (115,693)	\$ (60,717)

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year ended December 31, 2020, with comparative information for 2019

	Internally restricted	Investment in capital assets	Unrestricted	Total 2020
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 336,187	\$ 871,992	\$ 309,426	1,517,605
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	-	(48,749)	(66,944)	(115,693)
Investment in capital assets, net	-	61,188	(61,188)	-
Transfers	(336,187)	-	336,187	-
Balance, end of year	\$ -	\$ 884,431	\$ 517,481	1,401,912

	Internally restricted	Investment in capital assets	Unrestricted	Total 2019
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 336,187	\$ 914,124	\$ 328,011	1,578,322
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	-	(43,601)	(17,116)	(60,717)
Investment in capital assets, net	-	1,469	(1,469)	-
Balance, end of year	\$ 336,187	\$ 871,992	\$ 309,426	1,517,605

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended December 31, 2020, with comparative information for 2019

	2020	2019
Cash provided by (used in):		
Operations:		
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	\$ (115,693)	\$ (60,717)
Item not involving cash:		
Amortization of capital assets	48,749	43,601
	<u>(66,944)</u>	<u>(17,116)</u>
Change in non-cash operating working capital:		
Decrease in accounts receivable	252,975	329,708
Decrease in prepaid expenses and deposits	4,125	27,266
Decrease in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(297,040)	(229,300)
Increase in unearned revenue	15,000	-
Decrease in deposits payable	-	(3,200)
	<u>(91,884)</u>	<u>107,358</u>
Financing:		
Proceeds from long term debt	40,000	-
Investing:		
Purchase of investments, including reinvested investment income, net of withdrawals	94,610	(140,970)
Purchase of capital assets	(61,188)	(1,469)
	<u>33,422</u>	<u>(142,439)</u>
Decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(18,462)	(35,081)
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	230,939	266,020
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	<u>\$ 212,477</u>	<u>\$ 230,939</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended December 31, 2020

Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association (the "Association") is incorporated under the Societies Act, Alberta as a non-profit organization without share capital. Under the provisions of the Income Tax Act, the Association is exempt from income tax. The Association's mission is to encourage, assist and ensure their members publish high quality community newspapers. The Association achieves this by providing education, marketing and fellowship.

Effective January 1, 2020, the Association transferred its display advertising operations to AdCanada Media Inc.

1. Significant accounting policies:

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. The Association's significant accounting policies are as follows:

(a) Revenue recognition:

The Association recognizes advertising revenue upon publication of the related advertisement.

Membership fees, AWSOM archive, AUNET and other revenues are recognized in the period to which the revenue relates.

Investment income is recorded as revenue when earned.

Unearned revenue occurs when payment has been received for services that have not yet been provided by the Association.

The Association follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Externally restricted contributions are recognized in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year received or receivable if the amount can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Externally restricted contributions for the acquisition of capital assets are recorded as deferred capital contributions and are amortized to revenue on the same basis as the related capital assets are amortized.

The Association applies for financial assistance under available government programs. Government grants are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred.

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2020

1. Significant accounting policies (continued):

(b) Cash and cash equivalents:

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and short-term deposits which are highly liquid with original maturities of less than three months.

(c) Capital assets:

Capital assets are recorded at cost. Amortization is provided using the straight-line method over the useful life of the capital asset as follows:

Asset	Useful life
Condominium office unit	40 years
Furniture and fixtures	5 years
Computer	3 years

Assets under development are not amortized.

The carrying amount of a capital asset is tested for recoverability whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognized when the capital asset's carrying amount is not recoverable and exceeds its fair value.

(d) Interest in C.A MacLean Bursary Foundation:

The Association's interest in C.A MacLean Bursary Foundation, a controlled not-for-profit organization, has not been consolidated.

(e) Contributed services:

Volunteers contributed numerous hours in carrying out the activities of the Association. Due to the difficulty in determining their fair value, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2020

1. Significant accounting policies (continued):

(f) Financial instruments:

Financial instruments are recorded at fair value on initial recognition. Freestanding derivative instruments that are not in a qualifying hedging relationship and equity instruments that are quoted in an active market are subsequently measured at fair value. All other financial instruments are subsequently recorded at cost or amortized cost, unless management has elected to carry the instruments at fair value. The Association has elected to carry all its investments at fair value.

Transaction costs incurred on the acquisition of financial instruments measured subsequently at fair value are expensed as incurred. All other financial instruments are adjusted by transaction costs incurred on acquisition and financing costs, which are amortized using the effective interest rate method.

Financial assets are assessed for impairment on an annual basis at the end of the fiscal year if there are indicators of impairment. If there is an indicator of impairment, the Association determines if there is a significant adverse change in the expected amount or timing of future cash flows from the financial asset. If there is a significant adverse change in the expected cash flows, the carrying value of the financial asset is reduced to the highest of the present value of the expected cash flows, the amount that could be realized from selling the financial asset or the amount the Association expects to realize by exercising its right to any collateral. If events and circumstances reverse in a future period, an impairment loss will be reversed to the extent of the improvement, not exceeding the initial carrying value.

(g) Use of estimates:

The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the year. Significant items subject to such estimates and assumptions include the carrying amounts of capital assets and provisions for impairment of accounts receivable. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2020

2. Accounts receivable:

	2020	2019
Trade and other receivables	\$ 8,677	\$ 273,042
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy	5,871	-
Due from AdCanada Media Inc.	16,164	-
Due from C.A. MacLean Bursary Foundation	3,180	26,573
	33,892	299,615
Allowance for doubtful accounts	-	(12,748)
	\$ 33,892	\$ 286,867

3. Investments:

	2020	2019
Cash and short term investments:		
Cash	\$ 14,755	\$ 20,497
Short term notes and deposits	-	50,760
Fixed income:		
Government and corporate bonds and bond funds	158,777	184,511
Equities:		
Canadian and foreign	116,884	123,432
Foreign	56,313	59,402
Pooled investment trusts	14,316	17,083
	\$ 361,045	\$ 455,655

Investment income is comprised of interest income of \$11,231 (2019 - \$12,805), realized gains (losses) on disposal of investments of \$4,963.40 (2019 - \$(2,053)) and unrealized (losses) gains on investments of \$5,212.45 (2019 - \$37,685).

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2020

4. Capital assets:

			2020	2019
	Cost	Accumulated amortization	Net book value	Net book value
Condominium office unit	\$ 1,278,815	\$ 394,384	\$ 884,431	\$ 870,271
Furniture and fixtures	203,418	203,418	-	-
Computer	612,325	612,325	-	1,721
	\$ 2,094,558	\$ 1,210,127	\$ 884,431	\$ 871,992

5. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities:

Included in accounts payable and accrued liabilities as at December 31, 2020 are government remittances payable of \$4,628 (2019 - \$4,875) relating to federal sales taxes and payroll taxes.

6. C.A. MacLean Bursary Foundation:

The C.A. MacLean Bursary Foundation (the "Foundation"), a controlled not-for-profit organization, provides financial and other assistance to those wishing to complete courses and/or training in journalism and related fields. The Foundation is incorporated under the Societies Act, Alberta as a non-profit organization and is a registered charity for income tax purposes. Membership and Board of Directors of the Foundation are primarily selected by the Board of Directors of Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association. The Foundation's financial statements reflect the following:

	2020	2019
Cash and investments	\$ 137,339	\$ 172,095
Due to Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association	(3,180)	(26,573)
Net assets	\$ 134,159	\$ 145,522

	2020	2019
Donations, fundraising and investment income	\$ 6,817	\$ 17,251
Total expenditures	\$ (18,180)	\$ (18,203)

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2020

6. C.A. MacLean Bursary Foundation (continued):

During the year, the Foundation provided a contribution of \$15,000 to the Association to be expended for the Association's annual convention. At year end, this amount was included as part of unearned revenue.

These transactions are in the normal course of operations and are measured at the exchange amount, which is the amount of consideration established and agreed to by the related parties.

7. Credit facilities:

The Association has an operating line of credit available of \$1,000,000 which has not been drawn upon. The operating line of credit is revolving and bears interest at 1.25% above the Association's bank prime lending rate and is secured by a general security agreement over all present and after acquired assets of the Association.

During the year, the Association applied for and received a loan under the Canada Emergency Business Account program. This loan does not bear interest until December 31, 2022, at which time the remaining balance will convert to a 3-year term loan at an interest rate of 5% per annum. If the balance of the loan is repaid on or before December 31, 2022, there will be loan forgiveness of 25% or \$10,000.

8. Internally restricted net assets:

	2020	2019
Future unusual or excessive bad debts	\$ -	\$ 125,582
Research, development and training	-	210,605
	\$ -	\$ 336,187

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2020

9. Grant revenue and government assistance:

	2020	2019
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy	\$ 55,155	\$ -
Temporary Wage Subsidy	5,501	-
AWNA Community Newspaper Readership Survey	-	51,384
C.A. MacLean Journalism Student Internship Program	-	27,650
	\$ 60,656	\$ 79,034

During the year, the Association applied for and received funding under the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program. Included in accounts receivable is \$5,870 (2019 - \$nil) related to this program.

10. Financial risks and concentration of risk:

(a) Credit risk:

Credit risk refers to the risk that a counterparty may default on its contractual obligations resulting in a financial loss. The Association is exposed to credit risk with respect to accounts receivable. The Association assesses, on a continuous basis, accounts receivable and provides for any amounts that are not collectible in the allowance for doubtful accounts.

(b) Liquidity risk:

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Association will be unable to fulfill its obligations on a timely basis or at a reasonable cost. The Association manages its liquidity risk by monitoring its operating requirements. The Association prepares budget and cash forecasts to ensure it has sufficient funds to fulfill its obligations.

There have been no significant changes to the Association's risk profile except for those mentioned in note 10.

11. Impacts of COVID-19:

The COVID-19 pandemic and the measures taken to contain the virus continue to impact the market as a whole. The situation is dynamic and the ultimate duration and magnitude of the impact on the economy and the financial effect on the Association's business is not known at this time.

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Schedule 1 - Operating Expenses

Year ended December 31, 2020, with comparative information for 2019

	2020	2019
Wages, benefits and severance	\$ 313,884	\$ 427,700
Amortization of capital assets	48,749	43,601
Professional fees	28,885	27,115
Computers maintenance	25,162	34,542
Property taxes	16,341	21,473
Utilities	15,582	15,725
Office	14,966	17,962
Consulting	31,165	33,558
Interest and bank charges	7,812	8,978
Telephone	6,244	12,463
Insurance	5,880	5,153
Bad debts (recoveries)	(9,385)	63
Memberships and subscriptions	1,032	5,882
Meetings	830	10,158
Training	160	7,762
	<u>\$ 507,307</u>	<u>\$ 672,135</u>

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Schedule 2 - Marketing and Promotion Expenses

Year ended December 31, 2020, with comparative information for 2019

	2020	2019
Sponsorships	\$ 604	\$ 300
Gifts and donations	281	2,168
Readership study	-	57,526
GIS/Market research	-	10,614
Travel	-	4,254
Trade magazine	-	1,040
	\$ 885	\$ 75,902

ALBERTA WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Schedule 3 - Committee Expenses

Year ended December 31, 2020, with comparative information for 2019

	2020	2019
Government relations	\$ 363	\$ 1,465
Advertising and promotion	332	689
Education	44	29,605
Golf tournament	-	341
History book (recoveries)	(14)	(10)
Better Newspapers competition	(444)	943
	\$ 281	\$ 33,033

Executive Report

June 2021

The Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association Executive Committee has been quite active over the past season. Earlier this year we had adopted a more frequent meeting schedule which has allowed the executive committee to remain in more frequent contact with the Executive Director.

Early on in the year the committee asked the Executive Director to contact as many publishers as possible in an effort to better understand the challenges faced across the province in the face of COVID. The Executive Director was able to engage a substantial number of publishers who represented titles from across Alberta. From these discussions a variety of concerns were brought forward. Many were related to the challenges of COVID but also touched on sales, digital challenges, Canada Post and the AWNA space donation program. Members are encouraged to contact the Executive Committee and Executive Director at any time to discuss challenges you may face in your local markets.

Other matters we have worked on this year was the sale of the AWNA office, transitioning our association away from being landlords and using revenue to help support long term association work. Contract discussions are just beginning with our Executive Director and will continue over the summer. We continue to discuss our partnership with AD Canada as we approach the renewal date of our contract and have updated on work being done by our Government Affairs Committee.

The regular meetings have proven beneficial to all involved with plans to continue with these semi regular meetings going forward. I want to thank both Mary and Evan for their help in navigating a variety of topics that are important to both the AWNA board and its membership.

Jason Lyon
Past President, AWNA

Government Affairs Committee Report

June 2021

Thank you all for attending our Annual General Meeting. It has been an interesting year full of challenges for us all from both a personal and professional point of view. It has been a privilege to sit as the chair of our Governance Affairs Committee. It has been a fantastic experience. We have an incredible group of people working towards change in our industry from both a provincial, federal, and really an international point of view. Attached is an addendum to our report showing the activities for the year. We were surprised at how many meetings and how much progress we have made fighting for our industry on the government front. I'd like to preface this with a shout out to Dennis Merrell and Jeff Beardsworth whom we have been working closely with as we work to convince the Alberta Government as to why "Newspapers Matter" and why they should start spreading their message through the weekly papers in Alberta; their counsel has been incredible. We have also been fortunate to attend meetings with Duff Jamison regarding the Extended Producer Responsibility program as we try to find exemptions for newspapers or at the very least advertising-in-kind. With Duff at the helm, along with News Media Canada and lobbyists, we have been working on the Google/Facebook initiative. It has been amazing to work with people with decades of newspaper experience.

In the addendum you can get an idea of what we have attended and worked towards. The following is a high-level overview of what we have accomplished:

- Government Advertising. In July 2020, we attended a meeting with the Alberta government communication team in Edmonton. The meeting was arranged by Mr. Roger Reid, MLA. In the meeting Jeff Beardsworth set out an advertising plan and platform, like what he has been doing in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. We started the work to convince their team as to why the Alberta Government NEEDS to advertise in weekly newspapers. We also attended a meeting with Mr. Martin Shields, MP, who is actively fighting for newspaper advertising and recognition within the federal conservative party. Mr. Shields and Mr. Reid spoke on behalf of our industry at both the parliament and legislature respectively. We are starting to see some recognition from both levels of government in the form of future advertising. We will continue the fight.
- Extended Producer Responsibility. Duff Jamieson has been our point on this program. Duff along with Josyln Higginson, the News Media Canada consultant, have been actively pursuing every venue and government official as the province moves forward with the program. We are lobbying for total exemption from the program or at the very least advertising in kind as our contribution.
- Federal Lobbying. Our committee has been lobbying with News Media Canada on a format where the federal government begins the process of taxing social media giants. The model News Media Canada is pursuing is the Australian model. We are actively challenging News Media Canada on how any revenue from taxation will trickle down to

small weekly newspapers, rather than the media giants in Canada. We are fighting to make sure that we are not forgotten in the formula. We are also advocating to make the funding for Aids to Publishers more inclusive and asking for a bigger budget and funding for smaller weekly newspapers. It has been an uphill battle but one we will continue to pursue on behalf of our members.

In summary, please read the attached addendum.

I am very proud of the work our committee has accomplished. I have learned a tremendous amount from my committee colleagues and have enjoyed every aspect of being on this board. Thank you for electing me as a Director. I will continue to advocate for weekly newspapers. We are the check and balance to government; we are the voice for our communities, and together we will remain strong.

Lisa Sygatek, Chair
Government Affairs Committee

Government Affairs Committee notes – 2020-2021

Significant meetings held in 2020-2021

- **July 5, 2020** – dinner meeting with Livingstone Macleod MLA Roger Reid, attended by committee chair Lisa Sygutek, AdCanada CEO Jeff Beardsworth and AWNA Executive Director Dennis Merrell, to prepare for our meeting the following day with Premier Kenney’s Communications staff;
- **July 6, 2020** – meeting with Premier Kenney’s communications staff at the Legislature, to pitch them on an effective communications plan to reach rural audiences through community newspapers; shared research that shows digital/social media falls far short in its ability to communicate with vast swaths of Albertans outside of the major centers; meeting attended by AWNA President Mary Kemmis, Lisa Sygutek, Jeff Beardsworth and Dennis Merrell;
- **July 6, 2020** – MLA Reid hosted the AWNA group during Question Period in the Legislature, recognizing our group and the importance of community newspapers to rural Albertans;
- **October 19, 2020** – press conference held with rural editors, hosted by Municipal Affairs Minister Tracy Allard, to announce the “assessment model review”, in response to the plight of rural municipalities/districts that are dealing with unpaid taxes by companies involved in the oil sector; discussions held with Minister Allard about the advertising regulations in the Municipal Government Act, and the negative impact this is having on community newspapers; attended by Executive Director Dennis Merrell and AWNA publishers/editors;
- **October 23, 2020** – News Media Canada briefing on the Google/Facebook initiative, attended by E.D. Merrell and members of the AWNA Government Affairs committee;
- **November 19, 2020** – Meeting with Edmonton Strathcona MP Heather McPherson (NDP), to discuss the hardships faced by newspapers in light of the digital duopoly Google and Facebook; Ms McPherson was briefed on our industry’s position, which supports the Australian model – seeking licensing agreements with the tech companies that would see them paying royalties for news content that appears on their platforms; Ms McPherson appeared supportive of newspapers; the meeting was attended by News Media Canada CEO John Hinds, AWNA E.D. Dennis Merrell and Govt Affairs committee member Duff Jamison;
- **w/o November 23, 2020** – AWNA Government Affairs committee participated in News Media Canada’s ‘Lobby Week’ – distributing ads/editorials to newspapers that supported the NMC position that the Government of Canada should step in and compel the tech companies to enter into licensing agreements to pay for news content;
- **December 16, 2020** – press conference with Municipal Affairs Minister Tracy Allard, to announce/discuss the “municipal measurement index”, designed to help rural municipalities/districts; attended by Executive Director Dennis Merrell and AWNA publishers/editors;
- **January 11, 2021** – Meeting with Alberta’s Conservative party caucus to discuss ‘issues for small community newspapers’ – attended by Conservative caucus chair

James Cumming and MP's Martin Shields, John Barlow and a few others, along with News Media Canada CEO John Hinds, and NMC Vice-Chair Jamie Irving, Duff Jamison, NMC director and AWNA Govt Affairs committee member and AWNA E.D. Dennis Merrell; NMC asked for support on the federal government's proposed bill to require the tech companies to pay for news content; general issues facing community newspapers were also discussed; Mr. Cumming said that their caucus had not yet taken a position on the government's 'Google-Facebook initiative', but would get back to us on this;

- **January 21, 2021** – meeting with Alberta Environment Asst. Deputy Minister Ronda Goulden, to discuss the Alberta Government's proposed EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) program, that would shift the cost burden of recycling from municipalities onto industry/business; we presented our position on this to Ms Goulden, and were told that there would be an industry consultation coming up in the late winter/early spring, and that we would be granted stakeholder status; meeting participants included AWNA Govt Affairs committee chair Lisa Sygutek, Duff Jamison, committee member, John Hinds, NMC CEO, AWNA E.D. Dennis Merrell and Mark Teshima, policy wonk for Alberta Environment;
- **January 26, 2021** – meeting with Jonathan Koehli, Chief of Staff for Municipal Affairs Minister Ric McIver, to discuss the negative impact amendments to Section 606 of the Municipal Government Act are having on some community newspapers in the province; we asked for consideration of amendments or a repeal of this section, given the harm it is having. We requested a meeting with the Minister, to be attended by AWNA and AUMA representatives; meeting attendees included Government Affairs committee chair Lisa Sygutek, committee members Duff and Evan Jamison, and AWNA E.D. Dennis Merrell;
- **March 19, 2021** – meeting with Suzanne Trudel, Executive Director of the Alberta Magazine Publishers Association, to discuss the pending EPR consultations; attended by AWNA E.D. Dennis Merrell;
- **March 23, 2021** – meeting with Alberta Foothills MP John Barlow – to discuss the news industry's initiatives on the 'Google-Facebook' file, and the view from the Alberta Conservative caucus; attended by AWNA Government Affairs committee chair Lisa Sygutek, committee member Duff Jamison and AWNA E.D. Dennis Merrell;
- **March 23, 2021** – meeting to discuss possible solutions for small market independent community newspapers, with respect to the 'Google-Facebook' file; attended by NMC CEO John Hinds, committee member and NMC director Duff Jamison and AWNA E.D. Dennis Merrell;
- **March 26, 2021** – meeting to discuss the B.C. 'EPR' program with EPR newspaper rep Peter Kvarnstrom, to gain insights/develop strategy for the AWNA's submission; attended by Peter Kvarnstrom, AWNA Government Affairs committee members Duff and Evan Jamison, and AWNA E.D. Dennis Merrell;
- **March 29, 2021** – Town Hall with Education Minister Adriana LaGrange, to announce the new K – 6 school curricula; attended by AWNA E.D. Dennis Merrell and AWNA publishers/editors;
- **April 15, 2021** – meeting with Alberta Bow River Martin Shields, to discuss the Google-Facebook initiative and to seek his support on it; attended by News Media

Canada Vice-Chair Jamie Irving, NMC CEO John Hinds, AWWA Government Affairs committee Chair Lisa Sygutek, Taber Times publisher Ryan McAdams and AWWA E.D. Dennis Merrell; Mr. Shields outlined that he was a community newspaper supporter and not necessarily in support of the Google-Facebook initiative as he didn't see much in it for small community newspapers like the ones in his riding; Lisa and Ryan took the lead and asked MP Shields what he would like to see from us in this regard;

- **April 29, 2021** – follow-up meeting with MP Shields, attended by AWWA E.D. Dennis Merrell and Taber Times publisher Ryan McAdams, to continue the discussion held on April 15th; Mr. Shields reiterated his support of weeklies and asked for concrete data on federal government advertising in Alberta newspapers, along with what we felt our members needed from the federal government in terms of support programs, i.e., Aid to Publishers, tax credits, Local Journalism Initiative; we committed to sending him this information and planned a follow-up at a future date;
- **May 18, 2021** – AWWA's consultation with Alberta Environment on the pending EPR program, scheduled to be rolled out in Alberta this fall; we reiterated our request that newspapers be exempted from this program; the meeting was attended by Alberta Spruce Grove/Stony Plain MLA Searle Turton, Heather von Hauff, ED Water and Waste Policy, Alberta Environment and Parks, AWWA President Mary Kemmis, AWWA Government Affairs committee chair Lisa Sygutek, committee members Duff and Evan Jamison, AWWA E.D. Dennis Merrell and Joslyn Higginson, consultant to News Media Canada.

Membership Committee Report

June 2021

The Association accepted two new members this past year. The Drayton Valley Free Press and Your Southwest Media Group. The latter purchased the Oyen Echo; its first edition was printed mid-January.

The Membership Committee is currently conducting its annual review of newspapers. We are hoping to finish this in the next couple of months.

Dave Bruha, Chair
Membership Committee

Nominating Committee Report

June 2021

The Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association has operated the 2020/ 2021 year as a small nimble board. The adaptations that COVID has forced on us has proven to be a benefit as all meetings over the past year were able to be attended virtually. This has allowed board members to meet from the comfort of their own community offices, homes, back yard picnic tables or wherever they could find an internet connection. Less travel has meant cost reductions for the AWNA and has kept individuals close to where they have been needed.

The challenges faced by this board are a testament to their dedication. Having a diverse group that have knowledge across many facets of our industry has always been a great asset to all members. This could only have been done with the support of our front office staff, the direction of our Executive Director and those who have served on various committees.

I am pleased to be able to present a slate of officers and directors that represents the diversity of our industry and will be able to carry on the necessary work we faced over the past year. This group is aware of the challenges they have going into the next year and are well equipped to handle the transition into a post COVID world.

Jason Lyon
Past President, AWNA

Virtual AGM and Convention 2021

June 2021

AWNA's 2021 convention is Friday, June 4.

Due to uncertainty with COVID-19 restrictions, it will be an online event.

There is no charge to participate and all publishers and interested staff members are encouraged to attend.

Guest speaker Paul McNeill will kick things off at 12:30 with a presentation on Business Market – a new model for newspapers to generate digital revenue and become active online information hubs for their communities.

The AGM runs from 1:15 to 3:30 and will wrap up with a virtual social hour.

Get your ducks by Wednesday, June 2 at <http://bit.ly/AWNADucks>. The names of four winners will be plucked throughout the day.

Please confirm your attendance with Dennis Merrell dennis@awna.com or Maurizia Hinse maurizia@awna.com.

Shannon Robison, Chair
Convention Committee

Better Newspaper Competition Report

June 2021

375 entries were received for the AWNA Photographic awards and Awards of Excellence.

For General Excellence, we asked that members submit two months in 2020. They were to choose only one edition from March and one edition from September, the one that was considered the best issue for each of these months. 37 members sent in editions to be judged. Considering we have had several member newspapers merge into single titles, the numbers are comparable to last year.

We also dropped two categories this year, Arts and Culture and Environmental writing awards. These two categories received less than a handful of entries in the past.

The awards presentation will be online using Microsoft Teams on Friday, May 28 at 1:30 pm.

We changed our online competition software this year to a home-grown solution, thanks to Julie Anne McRae. It ran fairly smoothly, at considerable less cost. We received positive feedback from the entrants and the judges. Only a few minor things to tweak for next year.

A big thank you to Julie Anne McRae for all her work in putting the BNC handouts and slideshow presentations together and helping Maurizia behind the scenes to gather judges' final scores. She was also instrumental in setting us up on TEAMS for the presentation. We appreciate and thank the sponsors we have. A special thank you to George Brown for judging the photo entries.

Congratulations to all the winners and thank you to all those members that participated in the Better Newspapers Competition.

Report written by Maurizia Hinse and Julie Anne McRae
on behalf of Jill Sherring, BNC Committee Chair

Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association
Virtual Annual General Meeting
Thursday, Oct 1, 2020

1:31 pm President Jason Lyon called the meeting to order.

He welcomed and thanked everyone for joining. He added that this is not the easiest format to do an AGM, but trying to make the most out of this situation.

Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting, Friday, May 31
Moved by Jamie Nesbitt, seconded by Roger Holmes to approve the 2019 AGM minutes.

Business Arising from the Minutes
There was no business arising from the minutes, to report.

President's Report

President Jason Lyon reported that January 1, 2020 saw the transition of AWWNA's advertising sales to Ad Canada. The timing of this transition has posed challenges for Ad Canada on attracting new sales.

He said that although revenues have been lagging, AWWNA finances have remained close to what was forecast in the 2020 budget. We have transitioned into a much leaner organization in the interest of preserving our finances. Staff reductions, reduced hours for our Executive Director, leasing much of our AWWNA office space and virtual meetings have all allowed us to reduce what would have been a much larger financial burden posed by COVID-19.

Nominating Committee Report

Dave Bruha reported that the following people are on the slate to serve on the 2020-21 AWWNA Board: As President, Mary Kemmis; 1st Vice-President, Evan Jamison; Past President, Jason Lyon; Evan Jamison, Corporate Secretary; Directors: Lisa Sygutek, Shannon Robson, Jill Sherring.

Dave Bruha announced his first call for nominations from the floor.

Executive Committee Report

Dave reported that there has been little work for the Executive Committee. Most of the heavy lifting was done in the last term as discussions and negotiations with AdCanada were finalized and a new contract with the Executive Director was hammered out.

Audit Report

President Jason reported that we had a clean audit; no adjustments were required.

Year End Financial statement, December 31, 2019

Dennis reported that we did reasonably well financially in 2019, despite the business interruption costs related to a ransom ware attack and poor national ad sales. This was thanks to an upsurge in value ad sales, AWSOM royalties, earnings on our investments, lower wages (with staff reductions) and an overall decrease of 14% in expenditures.

The loss on operations of \$69,000 would have been \$48,000 if you excuse the \$21,000 business interruption expense, which was unforeseen and as it turned out, uninsurable.

Moved by Mary Kemmis, seconded by Evan Jamison to approve the 2019 Financial Statements. Carried.

Central Office Report

Dennis Merrell reported on AWWA's new business model. The AWWA has outsourced its advertising service to Ad Canada and shifted its emphasis towards member services and advocacy.

Another phase of the revised business plan has been the decision to lease the balance of the AWWA's business condo to Willow Medicine. We have signed a 7-year lease with them for this space and have reduced the association's office footprint to 600 square feet, on the 2nd floor, he reported.

Dennis reported that we were sad to end our relationship with Chrissie Hambin, AWWA's Controller . Maurizia Hinse continues in her full time position with AWWA; Julie Anne McRae stays on as a part-time consultant. Dennis added that he continues in a part-time role as Executive Director, responsible for financial management/ AWWA investments, advocacy, member/ board liaison/ communications along with managing our relationship with Ad Canada.

Dennis said we should be in a position to achieve a balanced budget by next year, without the need to impose any membership fees to replace the loss of ad revenue.

Ad Committee report

Mary Kemmis reported that the start of 2020 saw the move to AdCanada to drive national revenue to our newspapers. On the heels of a devastating malware attack on the AWWA systems, Ad Canada tried to piece together customer histories while navigating COVID upheaval.

Where the pandemic is affecting the sales-effort the most is in the ability to interact and engage with clients. Unfortunately, the timing of the pandemic hit right as we came out of the gate in AdCanada's partnership with the AWWA and immediately most agencies and clients into full lockdown. In spite of the less than ideal selling conditions, AdCanada has utilized all forms of communication to engage more clients, with more ideas and more often than ever before.

Jeff Beardsworth, CEO of AdCanada Media spoke to the delegates for a few minutes.

He said that it's hard to have meetings right now. Some agencies have not been going to the office since the pandemic. He added that AdCanada has been able to push forward on some of the ideas that were presented last fall, for example, forced buys; a localized approach; bundles. They are looking at dividing the province into 8-9 groups and will establish special pricing.

Better Newspaper competition report

Maurizia Hinse reported that she and Julie Anne put the report together.

It was close to an average year for participation. The presentations were made online using Microsoft Teams on three separate days. In future, we will look at holding them in either one-time slot or two. We will also slim down the software to cut costs, she said.

Duff Jamison added that there will not be a national competition next year.

Government Affairs Committee Report

Duff Jamison reported that the AWNA met early in the year with the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association to discuss the report AUMA had commissioned on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). In follow up communications, they asked for our endorsement of the report. We replied that our position was that newspapers did not belong in the EPR program and that our role should be as a communications partner informing the public about the program, should the province bring one in.

As of this date, we have not been successful in setting up a meeting with the Alberta Environment Minister.

Duff added that accessing government has become more difficult in recent years with layers of staff to get through. He recommends that it may be time for the AWNA to seriously consider retaining the services of a government relations firm to assist us with our advocacy work. A budget for this service has not been determined, although it is estimated to be in the range of \$25,000 for an annual retainer.

Membership Committee report

Dave Bruha reported that due to the craziness of the past six months, most notably the COVID upheaval that affected most of our members last spring, the annual review of publications was put aside and will hopefully be done prior to the 2021 AGM.

Convention 2020 Committee report

Lisa Sygutek reported that this year the AWNA was scheduled to celebrate its 100th Anniversary and she was put on the planning committee. However, due to the

pandemic, we are all left to celebrate on our own. It would have been a wonderful ceremony, she added.

Nominating Report

Dave Bruha presented his 2nd nominating report:

As President, Mary Kemmis; 1st Vice-President, Evan Jamison; Past President, Jason Lyon; Evan Jamison, Corporate Secretary; Directors: Lisa Sygutek, Shannon Robson, Jill Sherring.

He asked if there were any nominations from the floor.

He then presented his third and final report:

As President, Mary Kemmis; 1st Vice-President, Evan Jamison; Past President, Jason Lyon; Evan Jamison, Corporate Secretary; Directors: Lisa Sygutek, Shannon Robson, Jill Sherring.

He called for nominations to cease.

Dave Bruha proceeded to swear in the new Board of Directors.

Approval of all the committee reports

Moved by Dave Bruha, seconded by Mary Kemmis to accept all the committee reports. Carried.

Approval of the actions of the Board

Moved by Roger Holmes, seconded by Diana Walker to approve the actions of the Board. Carried.

Appointment of KPMG as auditors

A question was asked if this was the final year of the agreement with KPMG. Dennis reported that the agreement includes this year as well. He said that as Awna has changed its business model and no longer operates the advertising service, we should see a reduction in fees. KPMG has advised us that Awna still requires a full audit, as required by the Societies Act.

Moved by Dave Bruha, seconded by Mary Kemmis that we move to approve KPMG as Auditors. Carried.

Silver Quill presentations

Roxanne Thompson, Publisher of the Claresholm Local Press, presented Silver Quills to Frank and Emily McTighe.

Amanda Zimmer and Rob Vogt, of the Claresholm Local Press presented a Silver Quill to Roxanne Thompson

New Business

Roger Holmes pointed out that Jill Sherring who is now an Awna Director, is his niece and Richard Holmes' daughter, who was Publisher of the Provost News. Jill has worked at the Provost News for a number of years.

3:10 pm Moved by Diana Walker, seconded by Roger Holmes to adjourn the meeting.